

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 06241 171925Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9563

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 06241

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EXDIS

FOR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BUSHNELL

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MX, PEPR
SUBJECT: DRAFT LETTERS FROM SECRETARY VANCE TO CABINET
MEMBERS RE MEXICO

1. EMBASSY HAS REVIEWED DRAFT VANCE LETTERS TO PRINCIPAL
CABINET MEMBERS CONCERNED WITH MEXICO AND STRONGLY SUPPORTS
BASIC THESIS CONCERNING NEED FOR SUSTAINED, SPECIAL HIGH
LEVEL EFFORT TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE AND MORE INTERNALLY
CONSISTENT U. S. POLICY TOWARD MEXICO THAT REFLECTS ITS
GROWING IMPORTANCE TO THE UNITED STATES.

2. WHILE SHARING GENERAL STATEMENT RE MEXICO'S IMPORTANCE
OUTLINED ON PAGE 1 OF DRAFT LETTERS, WE BELIEVE THIS SEC-
TION SHOULD BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED BY MORE EXPLICIT
REFERENCE TO MEXICO'S ROLE AS THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF ILLEGAL
WORKERS AND FUTURE SOURCE OF ENERGY. WE SHOULD STRESS
ALSO MEXICO'S ROLE AS MAJOR TRADING PARTNER AND AS
COUNTRY WITH WHOM WE SHARE ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST EXTEN-
SIVE BORDERS, WITH UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP AND INTERDEPENDENCE
THAT THIS GEOGRAPHIC REALITY IMPOSES. EXCEPT FOR OUR OTHER
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NEIGHBOR, CANADA, AND INDUSTRIALIZED MILITARY POWERS, NO
COUNTRY IS LIKELY TO HAVE MORE DIRECT IMPACT ON THE FUTURE
WELFARE OF THE UNITED STATES THAN MEXICO WHOSE POPULATION
COULD SURPASS OURS BY THE YEAR 2020.

3. ALTHOUGH ENDORSING NEED FOR MORE SUSTAINED, HIGH LEVEL
ATTENTION, WE BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL THAT LETTERS GIVE EVEN

MORE STRESS TO THE REQUIREMENT FOR MORE INTEGRATED POLICY APPROACH TOWARD MEXICO. AT PRESENT, SEVERAL OF OUR SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES OUTLINED IN THE APPROVED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR MEXICO CONTAIN POTENTIAL CONTRADICTIONS (I.E., A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY TO REDUCE ILLEGAL MIGRATION COULD IN SHORT TERM UNDERMINE OUR OTHER OBJECTIVES AND GENERALLY GOOD RELATIONS).

4. IN OUR OPINION THE PROPOSED MECHANISM WHEREBY A DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FROM ARA DEALS IN A 1-TO-1 RELATIONSHIP WITH A SENIOR OFFICIAL FROM ANOTHER AGENCY TENDS TO PERPETUATE PRESENT DIFFICULTIES. IN LIEU OF CREATION OF WORKING GROUPS IN A NUMBER OF CABINET OFFICES WHICH WOULD PURSUE THEIR OWN INTERESTS AND BE ONLY LOOSELY COORDINATED BY CONTACT WITH ARA, WE SUGGEST LETTERS PROPOSE AN INTERAGENCY STANDING GROUP ON MEXICO TO BE CHAIRED BY ARA AND COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES AT ABOUT THE SAME LEVEL FROM THE AGENCIES CONCERNED. FORMULATION OF A STANDING GROUP WOULD ELIMINATE TWO OF THE DRAWBACKS THAT WE SEE IN THE LETTERS AS PRESENTLY DRAFTED: ONE, THAT RECIPIENTS WOULD NOT READILY UNDERSTAND WHAT THEIR WORKING GROUPS ARE SUPPOSED TO DO AND WHO THEY WOULD DO IT WITH; AND TWO, THAT AGENCIES MIGHT FEEL THAT STATE WAS TELLING THEM HOW THEY SHOULD RUN THEIR DEPARTMENTS. OUR EXPERIENCE IS THAT EVEN DESIGNATING MEDIUM HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS IN ANOTHER AGENCY AND GIVING THEM COLLEAGUES WITH WHOM TO WORK HELPS GREATLY IN CONFIDENTIAL

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DEVELOPING EXPERTISE AND IN BROADENING POLICY.

4. REGARDLESS OF THE METHOD SELECTED TO BE PROPOSED, THE LETTERS SHOULD BE MORE PRECISE IN DEFINING HOW IT IS TO WORK IN INTEGRATING PROPOSALS TO DEAL WITH A BROAD RANGE OF ISSUES IN U. S./MEXICO RELATIONS. WOULD THERE BE OPTION PAPERS, RECOMMENDATIONS, ETC.? WOULD DECISIONS BE REVIEWED AT HIGHER LEVELS, PARTICULARLY IF THERE ARE STRONG INTERAGENCY DIFFERENCES? WHAT WILL BE THE ROLE OF THE WHITE HOUSE AND PARTICULARLY THE NSC?

5. FINALLY, WE BELIEVE THAT TO FACILITATE THE HIGHEST LEVEL CABINET CONSIDERATION OF MAJOR ISSUES, MANY OF WHICH HAVE STRONG DOMESTIC IMPLICATIONS, IT MAY WELL BE NECESSARY, AT LEAST NOMINALLY, TO SET UP THE MECHANISM AT A LEVEL HIGHER THAN THAT OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY.

6. EMBASSY COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS REGARDING CONTENT OF INDIVIDUAL DRAFT LETTERS WILL FOLLOW SEPTTEL. LUCEY

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